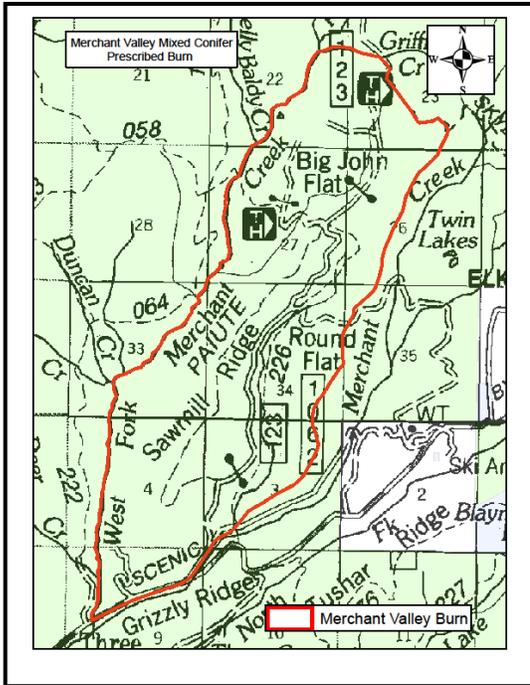




## Merchant Valley Mixed Conifer Prescribed Fire Beaver Ranger District, Fishlake National Forest



**Contact Information:** Wendie Wilding at 435-743-3127, [wwilding@fs.fed.us](mailto:wwilding@fs.fed.us). Cory Norman at 435-896-1074, [cnorman@fs.fed.us](mailto:cnorman@fs.fed.us)

**Planned Date:** Starting Fall 2011

**Location:** Midway up Beaver Canyon, approximately 11 miles, west of Eagle Point ski resort and the Big Johns road, and north of highway 153 in Merchant Valley.

**Legal Description:** Township 29 South, Range 5 West, Sections 3, 4, 9. Township 28 South Range 5 West Sections 22, 23, 26, 27, 33-35.

**Project Description:**

Starting fall 2011, the Beaver Ranger District hopes to begin implementation of the prescribed fire project by burning approximately 300-500 acres.

This project is part of the North Beaver Fuels Project, which encompasses the area north of Beaver Canyon to Indian Creek, and from the forest boundary on the west to approximately the Big Johns road to the east (60,000 acres). The Merchant Valley Mixed Conifer Prescribed Burn is a small unit of approximately 3,000 acres that runs from Merchant Valley up the west fork of Merchant Creek to its intersection with the Skyline trail. It follows the Skyline trail east to the top of the ridge above Merchant Creek, following the ridgeline southwest to highway 153, then following highway 153 down to Merchant Valley.

The overlying objective is to reduce fuel loadings in this area. The area consists of mixed conifer, and Aspen fuel types. Fire exclusion over time in this area has left abundant dead and down fuels, increasing the risk of a high severity wildfire. Other objectives fire managers have for the burn is to return fire to its natural role in the landscape by maintaining a diverse mosaic pattern of vegetation, and reducing the fuel loadings in the area. Due to elevation and fuel type (trees), burning in this area will occur, for the most part, in the fall. The entire 3,000 acre area **will not** be burned at one time; smaller sections will be treated as conditions permit. Timeframes will vary depending on conditions and results. This area could be treated in as short as 2 years or it may take up to 5 or more years. A mosaic pattern is desired with a diverse age class of vegetation. This will be achieved by using the changes in vegetation and topography to influence fire behavior. The desired burn window is following the first hard freeze, and just prior to the first snow of the season. Ignition techniques that will be used in this unit consist of drip torches, and other hand devices that can easily be controlled. All prescribed fire prescriptions will be met, including the requirements by the State Department of Air Quality. Prescribed fire personnel (holding forces, engines) will remain on-site until the area is safe for the public and the risk of the fire escaping has passed. Public notifications, press releases and road signs will be used to inform the public of the project status.

